

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Over-Population.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

From time to time timorous philosophers have been alarmed at the prospect of over-population, and some persons, who perhaps are more wicked than timorous, have expressed a conviction that no good can arise from any efforts of theirs in this direction, at least to the end that their posterity shall have the ability to make further addition to the census.

What we have been told by the philosophers is this:—Should society be so improved as to give to every human being advantages for complete mental culture and physical training, and at the same time so reorganize industry that a few hours' labor each day will give ample supplies of food, the grand result would be, first, such a universal sense of justice that war would cease, and such a knowledge of diseases that common ailments, and of course pestilence, would be unknown; and second, that the human race would double itself in twenty-five years.

And yet, so far from considerations of this kind being of an alarming character, they are of the least possible consequence. How long man is to live on the planet is unknown; but so far as the generations now living are concerned, the race ends when they have passed away, as much as it ends with the last man in some far distant period, while the heavens blaze with the final conflagration.

The Tenure-of-Office Law. From the N. Y. Herald.

General Butler, the man rejected by the extreme radicals of the Fifth Congressional district of Massachusetts, but re-elected for all that by an overwhelming majority, achieved on Monday, backed by the potential Washburne, a very important victory in the House of Representatives in behalf of a new departure of the Republican party under General Grant.

It is possible that the radicals in the Senate, where they have no previous question, will endeavor to prevent the passage of this bill by parliamentary evasions and delays; but the friends of the repeal, we understand, intend to push it through. The action of the House, at all events, marks the commencement of a new dispensation. It foreshadows not only the repeal of the Tenure-of-Office law, but the failure of Mr. Jenckes' Civil Service bill and of the little bill of Mr. Edmunds in the Senate, excluding from civil offices officers of the army and navy.

Had the vote of the House on Monday been taken without a call to the record, it is probable that Butler's bill would have failed; but the record, in bringing the members face to face with General Grant, cut down the Tenure of Office law party to forty-seven.

The Paris Conference.

It appears now that the alarming difficulty in the East will be got over without the necessity of going to war. The parties who signed the treaty of Paris, 1856, are too much interested in the preservation of peace to allow Turkey and Greece to go to war just yet.

take a new shape, and when war will be less connected with future alarming possibilities. In the meantime war in the East must be avoided, because it would inevitably create complications the issue of which no one can foresee.

The New York Senatorship.

From the N. Y. World.

In the Hall of the Delavan House at Albany an incident worth telling occurred the night of Mr. Grant's arrival. His first object was to persuade the Republicans of the Legislature to pitch Morgan overboard, reject Fenton, and elect Marshall O. Roberts United States Senator.

The dust of travel was fresh upon the white coat of a newly-arrived traveller, whose name need not be here disclosed, when a friend, one of the ubiquitous correspondents of the press, espied him, and pressing on through the throng, slapped the white-coat upon his shoulder, and hailed him with joyful salutations.

"Well, old man, I suppose you came up about the Senatorship?" "Yes, that's what's the matter."

"But they say you are for Roberts, not Greeley, this time?" "That's true."

"Is it possible? Humph! Well, old fellow! how much money have you got? Let's know the size of your pile." We might betray political secrets, going further in this dialogue. But the vanity of the Legislature itself, which it takes for granted, is a circumstance worth plain and honest people's attention.

This corruption, all but universal in the office-holders and politicians of the Republican party, attested as it is much more than abundantly by every sort of conclusive evidence, would be more than detestable, it would be heart-sickening, but for the democratic faith we have in the honesty of the masses of both parties, and the firm conviction we cherish that this four years' carnival of thieves to which the country consented last November will make an honest government certain thereafter.

This leads us to say that if there are, by God's mercy, so many as sixteen honest Republicans in the Albany Legislature, who, for the sake of defeating Morgan or Fenton, will join the Democrats in voting for some other Republican, let the Democrats of the Legislature absolutely insist that the candidate of such a coalition be a perfectly honest and indisputable man—not any Marshall O. Roberts, but some man whose integrity is conspicuous and indisputable, like Governor Fish or George H. Andrews, William C. Bryant or Senator Folger—no matter who, so as that he cannot possibly be touched, tempted, or handled by the rings.

General Grant and the System of Appointments to Office.

From the N. Y. Times.

A correspondent of the Nation, who believes in Mr. Jenckes' Civil Service bill, and regrets that it is not likely to become a law soon enough to be of service to General Grant in making his appointments to office, makes this suggestion:—

"Cannot General Grant select six or a dozen competent and honest men, who, acting as a committee, would, under certain simple but flexible rules, nominate and appoint to office as they come to hand, and so deal with them that General Grant would be able to send up to the Senate no names of a faintly corrupt or glaringly incompetent man? It does not seem such a task; and if only the six or twelve committee-men could be obtained equal to the emergency, it would not be a very difficult thing to do."

Difficult or not, we fancy this is just about what General Grant will attempt to do, though he will not probably put his action in just that form. As described by the writer this plan would be an innovation, while, in point of fact, it is merely what is already provided by the Constitution, and sanctioned by the usage of the Government in its better days.

The Constitution, which makes the President the chief Executive of the nation, gives him power to appoint a head of each of the departments into which the Executive administration of the Government may be divided; and those heads, acting together, each in his appropriate sphere, constitute just about such a "committee of six or a dozen men" as the correspondent referred to has in view.

We are inclined to think that General Grant will hand over to that "Committee" (more commonly called a Cabinet) the duty and the responsibility of "taking up" applications for office as they come to hand, and of making from them such selections as they may advise the President to appoint. And we are inclined to think, further, that General Grant will prescribe for these committee-men "certain simple but fixed rules" of action—such as will most nearly meet the difficulties of the case—such as, for example:—

1. No man must be selected who is not thoroughly and reliably honest. 2. No man must be selected who is not thoroughly competent.

3. No man must be selected who is not, in principle and in habitual action, thoroughly faithful to the Constitution.

Under the guidance of these "simple, but fixed rules," if faithfully adhered to in their spirit as well as letter, the committee will have little difficulty in making it reasonably certain that "no name of a certainly corrupt or glaringly incompetent man" will be sent up to the Senate. The head of each department will probably be charged with the special duty of selecting the men to be appointed for service in his own department; and will probably be made to understand—as such things are understood only in military circles, or by men accustomed to a military régime—that he is to be held responsible for the men appointed to office in his department, responsible for their integrity as well as for what they fail to do, in the line of their legitimate duty.

The thing of first importance in this matter is, of course, the selection of these committee-men—or, in more familiar phrase, the selection of a Cabinet. The whole country understands perfectly that upon this depends the success or the failure of General Grant's administration; and the country awaits with intense but patient anxiety, tempered only by its confidence in his good judgment and upright purpose, General Grant's announcement of the selection of his Cabinet.

But there is another point of very great importance behind this, but following very closely upon it. Who shall advise the heads of departments, in their selection? No man can know all the applicants, be he Secretary or President; and no man can, therefore, from his own knowledge and of his own motion, select from them the men best fitted in all things for office. Whoever makes the selections must depend upon somebody for advice, or at least for information, at once full, reliable, and disinterested, which may guide him in coming to a decision. To whom shall he look for such information?

Of late years, members of Congress belonging to the dominant party have claimed the right not only to advise the Executive in regard to appointments in their respective districts, but absolutely to dictate those appointments to him. The word is not too strong. In form they ask certain appointments at his hands; if he makes them, all is serene and they are his "friends." But if he refuses to make them, they array themselves against him, and denounce him as false to his friends and a traitor to his party.

The plea urged is that the member from any district is naturally presumed to know more about the political interests of his own district, and of the character, political and personal, of the applicants for office within it, than the President possibly can; and that he is therefore the proper person to designate the appointments for it.

From such points of view the Pacific Railway, E. D. as a way, during the existence of the contract, designated by the Chief Quartermaster's Department of the War, and the same may be designated by the forwarding officer in the State of Texas and Territory of Colorado south of latitude 36 degrees north, in such positions of the same as to be designated in the Territory of Arizona and Territory of New Mexico, or such other depot as may be designated in that Territory, and any intermediate points on the route to that depot.

PROPOSALS. ARMY TRANSPORTATION. FORT LEAVENWORTH, MO., Dec. 1868. SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this office until 11 o'clock A. M. on January 20, 1869, for the TRANSPORTATION OF MILITARY SUPPLIES during the year commencing April 1, 1869, on the following route:—

There are at least two serious objections to this practice and to the theory on which it rests. 1. It is in violation of the spirit and intent as well as the language and letter of the Constitution, which gives to the President the selection of officers of the Government, subject only to the "advice and consent" of the Senate.

2. Even as advisers Congressmen are not disinterested. The yonks their own political interests, or their own personal feelings. And some of them actually make a pecuniary profit from the offices which they can control. Even the best of them use the Executive patronage, so far as they can control it, to pay their political debts, or to secure their future political advancement. They pay for what their personal supporters have already done for them, or they buy support for themselves in the future.

The whole system is false in theory, vicious and demoralizing in practice, and fatal to the independence and integrity of the Government. It ought to be broken up. Members of Congress should be free, and should be invited, to give information concerning candidates for office within their districts, and that information should weigh much or little, according to its intrinsic value.

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a matter of doubt, and depends on his ability to contend successfully against the various influences and combinations that are interested in maintaining the existing state of things, and which most assuredly will not surrender it without a bitter and a desperate struggle.

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